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BY W. A. LEE AND HUGH WILSON, JR.

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A Word In Season.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

Among his brethren, Abraham Farfel was considered a 'Godly man.' That was, in fact, the appellation with which many of his church associates distinguished him. In prayer meetings his strong fervors were electric, moving all hearts as by a kind of spiritual magnetism. In club meetings, his stories of conflicts with Satan, and triumphs over the enemy of souls, were listened to with the deepest interest, and lessons of hope and encouragement taken therefrom by humble minded followers of Him who walked amid temptations without faltering foot-step. His 'leader' had no words of warning for Abraham Farfel. The burden of his weekly council was mainly in this wise:

"Go on, my brother, in the straight and narrow way your feet have entered.— Fight on in the good fight of faith.— Keep your armor whole, and let no rust spot dim the brightness of your sword. How beautiful is the Christian's life; how noble the truly Christian man! Angels bend from their supernal heights to look upon him, while a divine admiration fills them with ineffable delight. A crown of glory awaits you, my brother. The heavenly mansions are prepared. Oh, walk onwards without a wavering step! Turn not to the right nor the left; but onwards, straight onwards in the way you have chosen; it is the narrow way to Heaven."

So thought Abram Farfel's class-leader, who met him only once a week, on Sunday mornings, at the class room; and so thought nearly all of Abraham Farfel's brethren in the church, who only saw the pious side of his character.

In the world, however, that outside wilderness in which, according to the belief of some, no flowers of holy living can take root and grow, in the world, away from which so many religious keep their religion, Abraham Farfel was seen and regarded in a different light. Few men were more eager to get gain, or clutched at gold with a more voracious hand. He was shrewd, sharp and exacting—claiming his own to the very uttermost farthing; and too often, we fear, getting a farthing that belonged to somebody else while rigidly bent on securing his own.

Mr. Farfel was not religious through any love of Heaven—else had he sought for heavenly states of mind, which include unselfish neighborly love—but from a dreadful horror of the worm that never dieth, and of the fire that is not quenched. And to escape the wrath of God, he gave up his Sabbaths to excessive piety, that won for him a saintly reputation among his brethren. And in the blindness of his folly, he imagined that, for the acts of devotion, and hypocritical sanctity, he had acceptance with God.— Poor, weak, self-deceiving human nature!

Mr. Farfel was the owner of a row of ten small houses, standing in a narrow, unpaved court. He had built them as an investment, which, if looked after, would pay handsomely. Very poor people were his tenants, and he had the rents collected monthly. No regard whatever was paid to their health or comfort. He made no repairs that could be avoided. The rent was all he cared for.

One day the collector called to make his monthly returns. Abraham Farfel ran his eye over the list of settlements. He knew every house and every tenant.

"Ward has not paid," and he pushed his spectacles away from his cold gray eyes, and scratched his hard forehead.

"Sick, he?" said the collector.

"Sick, he?" How comes that?

"No, he looked at the collector as if he were to blame in the case."

"Were you ever sick, Mr. Farfel?"

"I have come to other folks' doors, and I have seen 'em sick, but I have never been sick myself."

"You have seen 'em sick, but you have never been sick yourself?"

"No, I have never been sick myself."

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Then he'll not be able to pay up?"

"No, sir; there's little hope of that."

"Hum-m-m. Well, it's a bad case for him. You're certain he has effects enough to cover the rent now due?"

"Yes."

"Very well—I'm safe. But what all the man?"

"He's been weak for some time; and tumbled, in spells, with a bad cough. Three weeks ago he bled freely from the lungs, and since that time has not been able to get out. I think his days are numbered."

"Hum-m-m. Well, he must go, of course, if he isn't able to pay the rent. We can't have any lame ducks about you, know. Has he any friend? Or, must he look to the poor house?"

"He has a son in Reading, I believe."

"Oh, well; he'd better get to him as quickly as possible. Did you give him notice to vacate the premises?"

"No."

"Why not? If he can't meet the rent, he can't stay."

"A man sick, it may be unto death, Mr. Farfel, is entitled, I think, to some humane consideration. Ward has paid his rent, punctually, for two years; and now, he pleads inability, and asks some leniency, on account of severe illness."

"Leniency? How? What? I don't get your d.iff. He doesn't want to pay his rent!"

Light had come into Mr. Farfel's mind. "He can't pay it," said the collector.

"He must pay it," answered the landlord.

"Mr. Farfel, the collector's voice dropped to a tone of persuasion, I think the case of Ward deserves your kindest consideration. He is very poor, and prostrate with a sickness that I fear will render him dependent on others during the short time he will remain on the earth. Suppose you forgive him the rent due."

"Preposterous!" ejaculated Mr. Farfel. "He has the means of paying a just debt; and let him pay it like an honest man. He will sell his furniture before going to his son in Reading; and, in all fairness, he should pay me out of the proceeds.— His wife and his son must take care of him. They're not worth much if they can't do that."

"Then you won't forgive him the debt?"

"No, sir. You must seek to its collection. That would be a very bad precedent. Half my tenants in the court would be on the sick list within three months, and intercessors for a remission of their rent. No, sir. That way of doing business is not in my line. I pay every man his due; I'm honest to the farthing; and I hold all men to the same equitable rule. I am just, sir, and consider it fairly my right to exact justice from others. Mr. Ward has no more claim on me for six dollars, than a thousand other poor men, in the same condition, have. I'm not called upon to scatter my hard earned substance in this 'wild way.'"

"The poor are in God's hands," said the collector. His feelings were not only interested in the sick tenant, but a little excited toward the hard-hearted landlord, the quality of whose mind he knew too well; and he helps them by means of pitying human hearts, and ready human hands. No claim has been made on you in behalf of the thousand poor men of whom you speak; only this one, halfead and wounded, has God brought in your way. Do not be as the priest and Levites to him, but as the good Samaritan."

"Excuse me, if you please," said Mr. Farfel, drawing himself up in a half-angled way. "I employ you as my collector, not my preacher. I listen myself, sir, that I comprehend my duty to God."

"The collector bowed, and without another word on the subject proceeded to make his returns. After he had said over the various sums which he had received, and added his large pocket-book, he was moving away, when Mr. Farfel said:

"You must see to getting that rent from Ward, who is to leave the house at once, so as to leave it for a better tenant."

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did it mean? The sentence haunted him. It was a long time since he had offered that prayer among his daily petitions. Its terms were of too general a character to meet his states, wants and aspirations, and for this reason he avoided its idle repetition. But now he conched over the words and sentences, in search of the meaning his admonisher had intended to convey. On the petition, 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,' his thought naturally lingered. To this, he had no doubt, the collector referred. But its special application he could not see; and he was about pushing the subject from his mind, when his heart suddenly lost a stroke and then throbbled on with jarring impulses. A new interpretation—at least for him—was suggested. 'As we forgive our debts.' How do I forgive? This question intruded itself. 'For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father in Heaven forgive your trespasses.' And this truth from the Divine Word, involving a law of spiritual life far above the reach of his low-soaring perceptions, warned him almost like a living voice.

'As we forgive our debts?' How the meaning grew upon him! That prayer might be for a blessing or a curse; dependent on the life and state of the petitioner. 'How do I forgive?'

Ah, now came the strife! And it was long and painful. Fear of the undying worm, and the unquenchable fire, which had so often haunted his gross imagination, and not a spirit of obedience, helped him in the combat with selfish and worldly loves. Humanity was victorious; not a higher and purified humanity, but that lower image thereof, which acts in bondage and fear instead of from the sweet, tender, yearning impulses of an inflowing divine love.

The sick man's debt was remitted; if not from the heart forgiven. How much better if it had been forgiven; for, not through our acts have we acceptance of Heaven, but in the states from which they flow.

Formation of Good Habits.

Those who have been much with children, know how readily their minds take the hue of what is around them.— We say they are imitative; but that does not clearly express the truth. There is in the fact something more than imitation; it is a process of education. They are observing and learning; treasuring up facts, impressions, and peculiar aspects of things around them; and the memory of these, more or less distinct, remains with them through life.

How careful then should every mother be in regard to her language, general conduct and home discipline; for on these will, in a great measure, depend the development of her children's characters. Hereditary qualities, of course, determine the direction of the character; but its right formation rests so much with the mother, that she cannot too seriously lay the matter of her duty to heart. Disorderly and evil inclinations are born with every one—there is no exception—and these must be reformed and repressed, and their opposites cultivated, from the very beginning. And here comes in the power of habit, which has well been called 'second nature.' Evil habits are spontaneous, coming naturally from the activities of an evil will; good habits are formed slowly, and the mother who would form such habits in her children, must patiently day by day, week by week, and month by month, never relaxing, never tiring, band and lead, and even sometimes force the young spirits in her hands into the observance of right and orderly conduct.— So much depends on the formation of good habits in children, that I am constrained to direct this matter upon all who have charge of them as a thing of the very highest importance. Alas, you have neglected in establishing habits of order, obedience, temper, love, and reverence, the best opportunity to influence you will have occurred, and the time of your children's lives is passing away.

There are now some who are saying that the new tariff law is going to be a blessing to the country at large, and to the consequences of the new tariff law going into operation. By them the law is denounced as one that carries the principle of protection to the very verge of prohibition, and as being besides so full of palpable blunders and inconsistencies as to render its execution very expensive and well nigh impossible. These are the views of the men in this country who are qualified to judge of such a measure. On the other side of the Atlantic the new law appears to meet with no more favor; and the sympathy which at first the British and French people were disposed to give to the Northern States in the present difficulties of the government is being converted into a feeling of hostility.

This change in European sentiment we have seen manifested in various ways of late. There is much suffering among the operative classes of England, produced by a variety of causes among which the secession of the Southern States occupies a prominent position. The English trade report which we print in another column, enumerating the causes that have acted unfavorably on that market, makes this clear specification:—"Political movements in the United States not only check exports, but retain money, due, and cause derangements of trade in other quarters." In another paragraph it complains that we are not content with bringing distress and derangement upon European traders by our political quarrels, but must also enact a tariff which is next to prohibitory, and thus shut the door to future commercial transactions. It states, also, that many American orders for goods have been countermanded.

Again, we have the same sort of complaint from France. The official paper of the Empire—the *Paris Moniteur*—expresses its indignation in strong terms at the increase of duties imposed upon French productions by our new tariff, and intimates the withdrawal of the national sympathy from the anti-slavery cause on the ground of the palpable insincerity of those who made it a stepping-stone to power. There is a latent meaning in this declaration. We find lurking in it an insinuated menace that, after all, it may be the policy of the empire not to give the cold shoulder to the Commissioners from the Southern Confederacy. Thus the Morrill tariff bids fair to prove destructive to Northern interests politically as well as commercially.

The mistake was the pressing of such a measure of legislation at a period when the country was in the midst of a revolution. Tariffs are always among the most delicate subjects of legislation, and never should be touched unless at periods of profound peace. Even then they should not be meddled with rashly or without due caution and deliberation; for a change in the revenue laws of a country invariably causes dangerous fluctuations in trade. But here this great change has been rushed into when a half a dozen States of the confederacy had withdrawn, and when the rest were too much occupied with the imminent dangers of the republic to bestow any attention on the details of a revenue law.

And now what is our position? The new tariff law, of necessity, goes into operation in all the ports appertaining to the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. In the ports that have yielded their jurisdiction the existing tariff, which was re-enacted by the Congress at Montgomery, it will continue to be in force. The rates of duty imposed in the latter are considerably less than those imposed in the former. Consequently, while merchants can import goods into the Southern ports at low rates of duties, it is not to be supposed that they will continue to import their goods into New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other Northern ports at high rates, and therefore the import trade at these ports will be, if not a state of things, at least a condition of things, that will be a source of great distress to the people of these ports.

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